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ABSTRACT

In the early twentieth century, supervisors began to move toward increasing professionalism in their positions. In the late nineteenth century, supervision was characterized by bureaucratic methods in a centralized school management system. Research reveals that after the turn of the century, there was a concerted effort by supervisors to deemphasize bureaucratic procedures and to increase emphasis on a more democratic and professional outlook, at least in theory. One reason for this change of emphasis was that supervisors realized the tenuous position they occupied in the hierarchical school organization. The ill-defined nature of supervision and the indefinite and obscure status of supervisors within schools contributed to the desire to find legitimacy for their work. Second, supervisors sought to professionalize as a result of mounting criticism by teachers and other educators against rating and other bureaucratic devices for measuring teacher efficiency. Third, supervisors sought to professionalize to distinguish their work from that of administrators. The supervisors' quest for professional status to combat bureaucratization assumed greater importance after 1920. An analysis of literature in this field indicates that while theory supported the democratization and professionalization of supervision, very little actual progress toward these goals was made. (Author/JM)

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FROM BUREAUCRACY TO PROFESSIONALISM: AN ESSAY ON THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF SCHOOL SUPERVISION IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Jeffrey Glanz

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

I would just like to begin by thanking the Program Committee of AESA for giving me the opportunity to present this brief talk on what seems to me a very crucial and important area of investigation in terms of the history of school organization. Considering the recent interest in American educational historiography and studies devoted to school organization, in particular, it remains difficult to understand how an important and pervasive school function such as supervision has escaped historical investigation. Indeed, those presently concerned with school supervision, as a professional enterprise and field of study, are in a state of "historical unconsciousness." But what indeed can history offer us? I believe historical analysis can help us understand the antecedents of our present circumstance. By vitally and dynamically recounting history we possess the knowledge, indeed the wisdom, in which to explore contemporary issues, analyze current proposals, and discover new directions. I am not convinced, however, that historical exploration will alter existing conditions in our schools, but there remains a strong belief that we can begin, perhaps, to understand and become aware of the problems which have plagued supervision in schools. It is hoped that this paper will contribute to our understanding and historical consciousness. Further, it is my hope that this effort will stimulate greater analytical and interpretive study into the historical foundations of the field of supervision and its relation to the history of education and schooling, in particular.

The factors influencing the development of public school supervision in this country have been of great variety and complexity. Supervision has been influenced by developments such as centralized control over urban schooling, scientific and measurement movements, industrialization, flurries of reform, war-time activities, post-war

depressions, and other non-educational forces. The history of supervision is clearly a history of the interaction among men, their ideas, the institution of schooling, and the broad social and intellectual movements within American society. It would indeed be presumptuous to ~~now continue to~~ explicate in detail all the factors or forces impinging on the historical development of school supervision. Rather, I would like, at this point, to briefly examine the context in which the democratization of supervision, supposedly, took place.

In a paper entitled "Controlling the Schools: An Essay on the Bureaucratization of Supervision in the Late 19th Century," delivered earlier this year before the AERA meeting, I argued that supervision became the chief bureaucratic mechanism, used by superintendents, to gain as well as maintain control over urban city schools. The bureaucratization of supervision was undertaken by the nineteenth century reformer to standardize, centralize, control, and bring order to an urban school system beset by incompetency, inefficiency, and political influence. The pervasiveness of bureaucratic methods characterized the nature and conception of supervision in the late nineteenth century. It is my purpose in this essay to assess the efficacy of a centralized school management which relied primarily on bureaucratic supervisory methods. The study examines the direction that supervision took after the turn of the century. To be sure, the democratization of supervision at this time was in its infancy. Interestingly, the direction that supervision was to take was lucidly and perhaps prophetically expressed by Samuel Dutton at the turn of the century:

> . . . the efficacy of a centralized school management, such as several large American cities have adopted, will be tested by the degree to which the superintendent succeeds in controlling the huge forces under his command without excessive red tape. If centralization of power should mean

> such a refinement of rules, and such curtailment of individual freedom, and such exasperating espionage as to depress the spirits and cripple the free action of teachers, there would certainly be a reaction in favor of the earlier and more democratic methods.

The research in fact reveals that there was a concerted effort by supervisors to direct their emphasis away from bureaucratic procedures to a more democratic and professional outlook, . . . at least in theory.

I begin the essay by examining the broad social context in which the democratization of supervision took place. The turn of the century marked the dawn of a new age. Numerous economic, political, and technological changes were sweeping modern American society. These transformations had promising benefits for business, industry, science, labor, agriculture, and education. The talk of progress in 1900 meant urban development, materialistic concerns, a literate populace, accentuated differences between the rich and poor, the extension of educational opportunity, and the promise of new abundance. The overall picture, however, was not a rosy one. Progressivism, as a broad social and intellectual movement, urged for social reform on many fronts such as protecting the rights of consumers, farmers, and factory workers and eradicating governmental corruption, institutional regimentation, and bureaucracy. While accepting the precepts and doctrines generally associated with urbanization and industrialization, reformers sought to eradicate the evils wrought by modernization and its concomitant processes. They were hopeful that the American industrial system could be preserved from its own injustices and defects. The way to eliminate the maleficence of an industrial state was obviously, according to the progressive thinker, to be more democratic. "The remedy of the partial evils of democracy," wrote John Dewey in 1903, "is in appeal to a more thoroughgoing democracy." Inevitably, the progressive reformer looked to the schools for relief.

But an examination of the nature of school organization at the time reveals that bureaucracy was undeniably the dominant form of school organization across the country. The problem confronting the progressive educator in the early twentieth century was whether to transform the bureaucratic school organization into a vehicle for change, democracy, and professionalism, or to maintain stability and authoritarian governance. The supervisor, in particular, realized this problem and decided to alter his bureaucratic image in favor of a more professional outlook. The drive toward professionalism, initiated by supervisors, was taken in direct response to the rapid spread of bureaucratic tendencies in the public schools. Before proceeding to the specific factors that led supervisors to professionalize, I think it's important to entertain the query: who were these supervisors?

The function of supervision, before 1900, was primarily controlled and performed by the school superintendent. The supervisors that did exist before 1900 were merely persons whom were given minimal supervisory responsibility by the superintendent. The evidence indicates that their role in schools was ill-defined and obscure. As centralization became more widespread after the turn of the century, the need for more supervision was apparent. The superintendent could no longer visit, inspect, and supervise schools personally as he could, for example, in a small, rural community of nineteenth century America. Several administrative and supervisory positions had to be established in order to meet the growing needs of a complex, bureaucratic school system. Supervisors, general and special, and principals who bore responsibility for supervising teachers, increased in number as the school system grew in size and complexity. Supervision after 1900, then, became the responsibility of a functionary other than the superintendent.

Entertaining the question, "who was the supervisor?" is a complex task. The function of supervision was carried out by many people in the school organization. From the teacher's perspective, anyone who was not "teaching" was called a supervisor. Basically, there were two categories of supervisors in schools: special and general supervisors, and principals. Special supervisors were those individuals who aided teachers in various subject areas such as penmanship, music, drawing, and spelling. These supervisors, usually female, received little formal training and were selected from the teaching ranks based on presumed excellence in the classroom. General supervisors, almost always male, dealt with the more general subjects and certain administrative duties. Apparently, the prevalent nineteenth century notions of male-female roles in schools persisted in the early twentieth century. Note Chancellor's remarks made in 1904:

> That men make better administrators I have already said. As a general proposition, women make the better special supervisors. They are more interested in details. They do not make as good general or assistant superintendents, however.

Payne, in the late nineteenth century, emphatically voiced his opinion on the matter:

> No; women can not do man's work in the schools; and one of the greatest dangers which threaten our public school system is the gradual displacement of men from the higher departments, where their influence is especially needed. . . . With respect to instruction, pupils may be taught by women exclusively till the end of the grammar grade; but beyond this there are some general branches, as physics, chemistry, and mathematics, which are best taught by men.

The distinction between the supervisor and principal is interesting and revealing. The principal was the first and only functionary who was required to have specialized training beyond the teacher's education. The principal's primary duties were "helping teachers" and administering his or her particular school. The principal

was directly responsible to the superintendent. General and special supervisors, on the other hand, were subordinate to the school principal. The supervisor, in general, was seen as an advisor with no authority. One supervisor admonished that the supervisor should not "forget that the superintendent runs the whole system and the principal runs his school, and you are merely an expert whose duty it is to assist improving instruction. . ."

In my study of supervision in this post-1900 period the research indicates that the drive toward professionalism pertained to all types of supervisors. Therefore, my analysis of supervision treats principals, general and special supervisors, and other functionaries who supervised under one broad category of "supervisor."

Three factors led supervisors toward a concerted effort to professionalize. To understand the first factor one must necessarily examine the duties and responsibilities of supervisors. The research reveals that the duties and responsibilities of supervisors in American schools were clearly limited during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Although the function of supervision in schools became a position represented by someone other than the superintendent, the duties delegated to these supervisors were limited to administrative, time-consuming enterprises such as the collection of school reports, which often were little more than records of the attendance of teachers and pupils for a given month. The supervisor's sphere of influence and authoritative realm were also restricted. The evidence clearly suggests that the job specifications for the supervisor remained nebulously defined. In the early twenties, for example, it was admitted that "the present status of supervision is one of confusion, not to say of chaos. We have a multiplicity of names that plague us just as our unscientific alphabet does; the same function is called by different

names and each name stands for a variety of functions. . ."

There are a number of explanations for this apparent inattention to the supervisor. I will briefly mention two. First, it was a time in which the conceptions of the superintendency were forming. The idea ~~realization~~ that school administration could become a specialized profession was apparent. Influential men, such as Frank Spaulding, George Strayer, William Chancellor, and Ellwood Cubberley and their ideas concerning the business-managerial notion of administration helped formulate the basic theories of the emerging field. Administration, not supervision, was the prime concern. Supervision, if anything, was seen as an extension of school administration; or, as a recent authority in supervision said, "supervision was merely the arm of administration."

A second reason why supervision did not predominate thought was simply due to the fact that there was no dominant voice for the twentieth century supervisor. The days of Harris' enormous influence on school administration and supervision had passed.

Supervisors during the first two decades of the twentieth century realized the tenuous position they occupied in the hierarchical school organization. The ill-defined nature of supervision and the indefinite and obscure status of supervisors within schools contributed to the desperate attempt to find institutional legitimacy for their work. In this attempt supervisors focused attention on what was termed "teacher efficiency." This supervisory function was directly influenced by Franklin Bobbitt's notions of school management as well as by the use of rating scales to evaluate teacher efficiency.

As a result of a book published in 1911 entitled The Principles of Scientific Management, Taylorism and efficiency became household words. Taylorism and business management practices had a profound influence on administrative-supervisory procedures in the schools.

Bobbitt's attempt to apply Taylor's system of scientific management to the "problems of educational management and supervision" was published in 1913, in the 12th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education (NSSE), entitled "Some General Principles of Management Applied to the Problems of City-School Systems." He presented eleven major principles of scientific management. Bobbitt's fourth principle focused on the qualifications of teachers and the measurement of teacher efficiency. The rating of teachers, according to Bobbitt, was an important enterprise for the supervisor. The supervisor had to establish objective standards of measurement for teacher efficiency, thought Bobbitt. Bobbitt believed that "the way to eliminate the personal element from administration and supervision is tc introduce impersonal method of scientific administration and supervision." The importance of Bobbitt's work lies in his advocacy for the need of supervision as well as for method in supervision.

Bobbitt's ideas of scientific management and teacher efficiency were consistent with the prevailing practice of rating teachers, which was initiated by Elliott's scheme in 1910. An analysis of the literature reveals that the function of supervision, during the first two decades of the twentieth century, was keyed to rating teacher efficiency. Various rating schemes and scales were promulgated during the early years of the new century. In a significant and representative attempt, Arthur Clifton Boyce of the University of Illinois, hoped to eliminate the rating of teachers based on personal, biased, and partial accounts of those doing the supervising. He presented his scheme in 1915 entitled "Methods for Measuring Teacher Efficiency." His scale consisted of five main headings: personal, social, school management, technique of teaching, and results. The supervisor would assign a value from very poor to excellent on the scale. Noteworthy attempts were also made by

Rugg and Elliott.

So it was that supervisors looked toward efficiency and rating as ways of assuming professional status.

A second factor that led supervisors to professionalize was the response by educators to their methods of measuring teacher efficiency. Teachers and other educators felt that rating scales and other bureaucratic devices used for "teacher efficiency" restricted the individual autonomy of the teacher. As a result, opposition to supervisors and their methods grew steadily.

Ava L. Parrott, a teacher speaking before the Department of Classroom Teachers in 1915, charged that rating scales were pernicious and bureaucratic devices. They are "fundamentally wrong. . . entirely unnecessary, a detriment to good pedagogy." She continued, "rating gives those who rate too great power and places them in a position in which they are open to temptation. Let's rid ourselves of supervision of this sort."

Quite a different outlook was presented by Jesse Newlon, superintendent of schools at Denver, in 1923. He asserted that supervision and rating was necessary. He insisted that teachers wanted more, not less, supervision. In response, perhaps, to Parrott, Newlon charged that "there are many teachers who resent supervision of any kind and quite often these are the poorest and most talkative teachers in the school system." Newlon lamented the fact that these teachers were "accorded places of leadership in teachers' organizations." Newlon believed that these teachers "are a menace to our profession and their numbers should be eliminated." Similarly, H. C. Storm in 1923 insisted that those who were supervised were overly sensitive and merely stressed "the destructive nature of supervision." "We have classroom teachers who think themselves so perfect and so wonderfully professional that

they need no supervision. These teachers," continued Storm, "would do away with all supervision and would sink all supervisors to the bottom of the deep blue sea. If they ever succeed," warned Storm, "our public schools will go to the bow wows."

Regardless of these defenses, the criticism against rating was virulent. In 1912, an editorial appearing in the American Teacher, the journal of the AFT, stated that "there is probably nothing, not even meager salaries, that frets and worries teachers more than supervision does." A review of the literature indicates that many individuals considered supervisory rating as anti-democratic. Sallie Hill, president of a teachers' organization, said in 1918 that "there is no democracy in our schools." She considered rating "vicious." "Here let me say that I do not want to give the impression that we are sensitive. No person who has remained a teacher for ten years can be sensitive. She is either dead or has gone into some other business," stated Hill. She concluded by saying that there are "too many supervisors with big salaries and undue rating powers."

The situation that supervisors found themselves in was as follows: Realizing the vulnerable position they occupied in the bureaucratic hierarchy, they sought ways of legitimizing their existence in schools. They devised methods for rating teachers, hoping that this would alleviate many of their problems. However, they encountered much opposition. As a result, supervisors in the 1920s began to search for new methods and conceptions in supervision.

The desire to distinguish their work from administration was a third factor contributing to professionalism on the part of many supervisors. As I have indicated, supervision remained subserviant to the whims of school administration. The evidence suggests that many supervisors strived to elevate supervision on an equal par with administration.

Thus far, I have elucidated three factors that led supervisors to professionalize. The supervisor's quest for professional status to eradicate their obscurity in schools, to gain legitimation in the eyes of teachers, and to distinguish their work from administration would assume unprecedented importance after 1920. Professionalism as a process affecting supervisors represented, especially during the twenties and thirties, a concerted effort on the part of supervisors to achieve some sort of internal organization, guidelines for expertise, professional training, a strong political power base, and control over their work. The professional orientation of supervisors was manifested in five ways.

First, supervisors sought professional autonomy and development through the forming of a new organization and journal. Dr. James Hosic, speaking in March 1921, lamented the fact that there was a dearth of literature in the field of supervision while much was written about school administration. Hosic charged that there was a growing need for an organization dealing with the particular concerns related to supervisors and supervision. After all, continued Hosic, even the teachers had an organization in the Department of Classroom Teachers, founded in 1914. Hence, the birth of the National Conference on Educational Method. In May 1922, the editor of The Journal of Educational Method proclaimed "Meanwhile, through every possible agency we shall do well to publish the fact that supervision is a distinct occupation in itself, worthy of life-long devotion and demanding peculiar training and fitness." An examination of the publications, statements, and activities of this supervisory organization indicates the devotion towards a professional outlook.

Second, it was evident that professional autonomy could not be realized until supervisors applied the fundamentals of scientific inquiry. C. W. Stone in 1916 stated "Such applications of the scientific method are what will make education a science and supervision a respected

profession." A. S. Barr, one of the noteworthy proponents of scientific supervision noted, in his treatise An Introduction to the Scientific Study of Classroom Supervision, that the application of scientific principles "is a part of a general movement to place supervision on a professional basis." Another noteworthy personality who greatly influenced the concept of scientific supervision was Charles Judd. In an address before the National Association of Secondary School Principals in 1920, Judd stated that "teachers must be supervised in a fashion which is at once direct and scientific." In essence, supervisors believed that through the use of scientific principles they would be able to transform the traditional conception of supervision from mere inspection and classroom visitation to constructive and professional supervision.

Thus far, I have described the formation of a new supervisory organization, its attempts to achieve professional status for its members, and its advocacy of scientific principles as a basis for legitimizing supervisory work in schools. Another major theme promulgated by The Journal of Educational Method was the desire to distinguish supervision from administration. Historically, supervision was considered subordinate to administration. By 1920, writers urged for a clear conception of the nature of supervision as distinct from school administration. Margaret Madden, a principal in Chicago, Illinois, urged for a clear conception of the nature of supervision. She stated, "School supervision is not school administration; it is not school management. It is a field in itself or should be, . . ." Supervisors realized that if supervision was to become a profession and they professional people, then supervision must establish its own identity, its own standards, and specialized knowledge centered around a vital, effective organization. In other words, supervisors wanted recognition for their work in schools.

Closely allied with this consideration of separating supervision from administration was the marked emphasis for a change in the conception of supervision, that is, a change in function. Supervisors believed that administration connoted autocratic and authoritarian principles and that supervision, if it was to function, indeed survive, had to base its own principles on democratic and cooperative procedures. The advocated function for supervision in the majority of writings at this time was "the improvement of instruction." The attitudes, concerns, and aspirations of supervision during this period can best be summed up by the following anonymous quotation found in Playground and Recreation in 1929:

The Snoopervisor, The Whoopervisor and The Supervisor
With keenly peering eyes and snooping nose,
From room to room the snoopervisor goes.
He notes each slip, each fault with lofty frown
And on his rating card he writes it down;
His duty done, when he has brought to light
The things the teachers do that are not right.
With cheering words and most infectious grin
The peppy Whoopervisor breezes in.
"Let every boy and girl keep right with me!"
"One, two, three, four! That's fine! Miss Smith, I see
"These pupils all write well." This is his plan:
"Keep everybody happy if you can."
The Supervisor enters quietly,
"What do you need? How can I help today?"
"John, let me show you. Mary, try this way."
He aims to help, encourage, and suggest
That teachers, pupils, all may do their best.

The fifth way in which the professional orientation was manifested concerned the fact that professionalism meant that supervision would become democratic not bureaucratic. This fundamental idea was promulgated by two influences. One was John Dewey's Democracy and Education and the other, specifically related to supervision, was James Hosic's article in School and Society in 1920 entitled "The Democratization of Supervision." Taking a position similar to Dewey, James Hosic discussed democracy in terms of supervision. "The fact that he is invested for the time being with a good deal of delegated authority does not justify him in playing the autocrat," said Hosic. "To do so," continued Hosic, "is neither

humane, wise, nor expedient." Hosic delineated five criteria in applying democratic method to supervision. First, there must be a clear delimitation of the supervisory function. Hosic stated that supervision "is not identical with administration." Second, supervision meant genuine, constructive leadership. Third, adequate professional preparation of the supervisor was needed. Hosic emphasized the fact that the supervisor would no longer be "chosen from the ranks merely because he was a good teacher. . . ." Professional preparation, wide experience, and "sound knowledge of educational method" would characterize the supervisor, said Hosic. Fourth, scientific and impersonal standards by which to determine results had to be established. And fifth, recognition of the human element was necessary.

In general, those concerned with supervision in schools, particularly between 1920 and the mid-thirties, envisioned the guiding principles of the field as centered around five "key words": cooperative, creative, scientific, effective, and democratic. An examination of the yearbooks and other publications of the supervisory group pointed to the recurrence of these ideals. The idea was to equip the progressive supervisor with effective, cooperative, and democratic methods to improve instruction. William Burton, in 1937, declared that the new conception of supervision was apparent: "Supervision is an expert technical service primarily concerned with bettering the conditions which surround learning." This noted professor at the University of Southern California continued by saying: "it is sincerely hoped that the new definition will aid in eliminating from our thinking the implications of inspection, imposed improvement, and of the superiority-inferiority of the older relationship between supervisors and supervised." According to Burton, democracy had suppressed monarchical rule in school supervision. This indeed was the supervisory dream!

The question that has to be examined is whether or not these noteworthy aspects of professional behavior were exhibited and practiced in most school settings. Undoubtedly, the advocated theory supported the democratization and professionalization of supervision. The evidence suggests, however, that despite apparent strides, particularly in the newly acquired national prominence of the supervisory organization, the drive toward professional autonomy remained largely illusory.

Supervisors, in fact, encountered problems with each of the five ways they sought to professionalize. First, while their organization received, in its early years, notoriety, by the mid-thirties the organization lacked vitality and was losing members rapidly. This is one of the reasons, by the way, why the supervisory organization wished to merge with the Society for Curriculum Study. Second, supervisors encountered problems due to their interpretation of scientific method. Supervisors looked toward the scientific method for ready-made, immediate, utilitarian purposes. They sought to translate these tentative and theoretical scientific notions into prescriptive and practical applications in schools. Their overconfidence and narrow empiricism associated with rating schemes were prime examples. Also, many educators did not believe that the principles of science and democracy could be effectively combined. Courtis, in 1928, asked, "Can you supervise me scientifically and respect my personality? I'm afraid not."

A third problem that supervisors confronted centered on the distinction between supervision and administration. Supervision continued to remain secondary and subserviant to administration. A.S. Barr thought the distinction between the two fields was a "purely academic one." Barr continued, "The two can be separated only arbitrarily for the sake of analysis, a separation in function is impossible."

Fourth, the supervisor's attempt to change authoritarian supervision to democratic supervision never fully came to fruition. Teachers and other educators continued to criticize supervisors and their "un-democratic" methods. Finally, the ideals of democracy were difficult to accomplish when vestiges of authoritarian and hierarchical governance persisted throughout the school system. An examination of the literature indicates that the traditional notions of line and staff school organization persisted.

It has been the purpose of this essay to indicate that the drive toward professionalism of supervisors occurred in the early twentieth century. It was during this period that supervision, faced with a deluge of demands and a dearth of creative solutions, realized, to some extent, the problem or dilemma of seeking professional status within a demanding, imposing bureaucratic organization. My analysis of the history of supervision reveals the difficulties supervisors had in attaining professionalism within a bureaucracy. One is reminded by something William Faulkner once said, "The past is never dead, it is not even past." The history of supervision, if it has any meaning at all, demonstrates the necessity for educators today to come to grips with the very same problem that supervisors faced in the early twentieth century.